

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 044834
ORIGIN EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00
SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 /055 R

DRAFTED BY EA/K:FGRICH:FLW
APPROVED BY EA - MR. GLEYSSTEEN
HA - MR.SCHNEIDER
-----111367 220044Z /70
O 212337Z FEB 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 044834

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, PINS, KS

SUBJECT: OPEN LETTER FROM FORMER MYONGDONG DEFENDANTS

REF: A) SEOUL 1413, B) SEOUL 1415

1. THE HIGHLY CHARGED LANGUAGE USED IN THE OPEN LETTER FROM KOREAN DISSIDENTS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY TRY THE ROKG'S PATIENCE, ESPECIALLY SINCE THE LETTER AMOUNTS TO A DIRECT CHALLENGE FROM THE FORMER MYONGDONG DEFENDANTS DIRECTLY AIMED AT AMERICAN OPINION. ROKG CRACKDOWN AND REPRESSION AGAINST THE AUTHORS (ALL FORMER MYONGDONG DEFENDANTS), HOWEVER, WOULD CLEARLY UNDERCUT EVERY ADVANCE MADE IN RECENT MONTHS AGAINST REPRESSIVE GOVERNMENT BEHAVIOR. YOU SHOULD USE EVERY OPPORTUNITY PRIVATELY TO CONVEY TO APPROPRIATE ROKG LEADERSHIP THAT WE COULD ONLY VIEW WITH DISMAY ANY PERSECUTION OF INDIVIDUALS FOR ADDRESSING THEIR VIEWS OPENLY TO PRESIDENT CARTER, REGARDLESS OF THE VIEWS EXPRESSED OR RELATIVE VALIDITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 044834

CHARGES.

2. PUBLICLY, WE WILL NOTE THIS OPEN EXPRESSION OF DIVERGENT OPINION, A RIGHT WHICH IS VITAL IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY. WE WILL DO OUR BEST TO REFRAIN FROM BEING DRAWN INTO A DEBATE ON THE LETTER ITSELF, BUT WILL REAFFIRM OUR

RECENTLY PUBLISHED REPORT AS OUR CAREFULLY CONSIDERED JUDGMENT AT THIS TIME, STATING THAT NATURALLY WE WILL CONTINUE TO VIEW HUMAN RIGHTS DEVELOPMENTS WITH IMPORTANT INTEREST.

3. THE HIGHLY CONFRONTATIONAL AND EXTREME STATEMENTS IN THE "OPEN LETTER" HAVE SOLID PRECEDENT AND ARE A TYPICAL EXAMPLE OF OPPOSITION PROSE AGAINST SUCCESSIVE ROK GOVERNMENTS. HOWEVER, THE "OPEN LETTER" WILL INEVITABLY BE READ BY MANY IN THE USA WITH GREAT CREDIBILITY AND NO KNOWLEDGE OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TYPICAL AMERICAN AND KOREAN POLITICAL STYLES. BECAUSE OF THE HIGHLY PARTISAN AND PROVOCATIVE NATURE OF THE LETTER, RESPONDING OR COMMENTING ON IT ON ITS OWN TERMS IS PROBABLY NOT FEASIBLE, AND WOULD ONLY RAISE THE PROSPECT OF EXHAUSTING ROKG PATIENCE FOR FURTHER POLITICAL RELAXATION. YOUR VIEWS ON HOW BEST TO RESPOND TO THIS EPISODE IN A MANNER WHICH WILL FURTHER OUR HUMAN RIGHTS INTERESTS RATHER THAN ABORT THEM WILL BE MOST HELPFUL.

4. KOREA COUNTRY DIRECTOR RICH DURING MEETING WITH ROK EMBASSY POLITICAL COUNSELOR PARK KUN-WOO ON ANOTHER SUBJECT TODAY RAISED THE "OPEN LETTER" WITH PARK. RICH AFFIRMED THE IMPORTANCE WE ACCORD TO THE RIGHT PEACEFULLY TO EXPRESS DISSENT IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY. PARTICULARLY IN THIS INSTANCE, WHEN THE "LETTER" WAS ADDRESSED TO PRESIDENT CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 044834

CARTER, WE COULD NOT FAIL TO TAKE NOTICE IF THE ROKG SHOULD ARREST THE AUTHORS. RICH EMPHASIZED THAT THE RECENT STEPS TOWARD POLITICAL RELAXATION IN SEOUL HAD BEEN CAREFULLY OOSEFVED HERE AND FURTHER RELAXATION WOULD HAVE A VERY POSITIVE EFFECT ON OUR ABILITY TO COOPERATE FULLY WITH EACH OTHER. WE HOPED THEREFORE THAT NO SHORTSIGHTED ACTIONS WOULD REVERSE THAT PROGRESS, SINCE CRITICISM IS INEVITABLE IN A FREE SYSTEM. COUNSELOR PARK UNDERSTOOD THE MESSAGE FULLY AND SUBSEQUENTLY REPORTED THAT AMBASSADOR KIM IS STRONGLY URGING PRESIDENT PARK NOT TO OVERREACT TO THE "OPEN LETTER."

5. NEWS OF THE "OPEN LETTER" HAS APPEARED IN NEW YORK TIMES, WASHINGTON STAR AND LOS ANGELES TIMES, BUT FULL TEXT HAS NOT BEEN PRINTED TO OUR KNOWLEDGE. VANCE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HUMAN RIGHTS, DISSIDENT FACTIONS, PUBLIC CORRESPONDENCE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE044834
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: FGRICH:FLW
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780079-0045
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780231/aaaabagl.tel
Line Count: 109
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 38cab7d2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: 78 SEOUL 1413, 78 SEOUL 1415
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3532302
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: OPEN LETTER FROM FORMER MYONGDONG DEFENDANTS
TAGS: SOPN, SHUM, PINS, KS
To: SEOUL
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/38cab7d2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014